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ZNY CCCCC ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4676
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHLA/AMCONSUL BARCELONA PRIORITY 3407
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0433

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 000474

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/28/2018
TAGS:
EUN, PREL, PGOV, SP
SUBJECT: SPANISH VIEWS ON APRIL GAERC

REF: STATE 43742

Classified By: DCM Hugo Llorens for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The Spanish MFA expects the Balkans to dominate the April 28-29 GAERC but it also has strong opinions on Zimbabwe, Pakistan, Somalia, and the Middle East.
END SUMMARY.

//SERBIA//

¶2. (C) Spanish MFA Deputy Director General for ESDP Carlos Fernandez-Arias told Poloff April 25 that the GAERC would not be able to sign the SAA with Serbia, due to the continuing concerns of some EU states in advance of Serbia's elections. He said that the Spanish message to both Serbian FM Jeremic and the Kosovars was on the importance of no further security incidents prior to the elections. Spain expects to support an EU liberalization of visa requirements for Serbia that will go part of the way to the SAA.

//KOSOVO//

¶3. (C) The GAERC will continue working on the EULEX mission and will discuss the importance of a quick transition with UNMIK, but Fernandez-Arias said the EU was still waiting for the UN go-ahead. The GOS has not wavered from their non-recognition of Kosovo, and Foreign Minister Moratinos took the opportunity to restate that opposition during an April 22 meeting with Serbian FM Jeremic. However, Spain claims to be leading the effort for Serbian integration into the EU.

//GEORGIA//

¶4. (C) Lithuania asked for Georgia to be included on the agenda, and the EU will consider a statement calling for respect of Georgia's territorial integrity and borders in the hopes of sending a strong message to Russia. Spain supports this message, according to Fernandez-Arias.

//IRAQ//

¶5. (C) The GAERC will issue conclusions calling for member states to support the May Iraq Compact meeting. Poloff emphasized that the U.S. would appreciate European assistance in pushing Gulf States to open embassies in Baghdad.

//MEPP//

¶6. (C) Spain is concerned by the fact that the Quartet has not met since Annapolis. There is concern among EU states that the peace process has bogged down once more. GAERC conclusions may also ask the Israeli government to incorporate some sort of message to Palestinians as part of the 60th anniversary celebrations.

//ZIMBABWE//

¶7. (C) The GAERC will consider conclusions declaring the GOZ's failure to issue the elections results "unacceptable." The conclusions will also call for an end to violence, as EU states are receiving reports of increasing violence and serious human rights abuses in rural areas. Fernandez-Arias said there is a pessimistic mood in the EU that SADC has not done enough to push, and that a more aggressive approach, similar to what recently worked in Kenya, may be necessary.

//PAKISTAN//

¶8. (C) Fernandez-Arias said the EU is concerned about the potential for democratic instability in Pakistan. Spain wants the GAERC to consider Pakistan as an entity unto itself, not as an extension of the problem in Afghanistan. Fernandez-Arias said that Spain would support a role for EU development assistance on health, education, and social affairs in the Pakistani Federally Administered Tribal Areas, similar to what is already being done on the Afghan side of the border by ISAF partners.

//SOMALIA//

¶9. (C) Although Spain is admittedly preoccupied with the immediate problem of their captured trawler in Somali waters, Fernandez-Arias said that Spain would bring piracy up at the GAERC in terms of the need for a long-term approach to this issues, which clearly will not go away. He said Spain is working this issue at the UN and within EU COPS as well.
AGUIRRE